



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

ICTINIA MISSISSIPPIENSIS AND ÆGIALITIS NIVOSA, NESTING IN  
SOUTH-CENTRAL KANSAS.

BY N. S. GOSS.

While collecting in the State, I found, May 9th, 1887, quite a number of the Mississippi Kites sailing over and into the timber skirting the Medicine river, near Sun City, Barber county, and from their actions knew that they were mating, and upon their breeding-grounds—a lucky find, one worth following up. On the 11th I noticed several of the birds with sticks in their bills, (green twigs in leaf,) flying aimlessly about, as if undecided where to place them, keeping hidden within the trees as much as possible, dropping the sticks when from fright or other cause they rose much above the tree-tops. I however succeeded in tracing one of the birds to an old nest in the forks of a cottonwood. Having thus located the birds, and knowing it must be some time before they would begin to lay, I left for the salt plains on the Cimarron river in southwestern Comanche county, and in the Indian Territory, where I found the Snowy Plover quite abundant. (See *The Auk*, vol. 3, No. 3, p. 409, in regard to finding the birds nesting in the same vicinity, last season.) I returned to the Kites on the 16th, and remained watching the birds until the morning of the 22d, at which time the nests found, seven in number, appeared to be completed, and I saw a pair of the birds in the act of copulation. A business matter called me home, and I hired the man with whom I stopped to climb the trees on the 28th for the eggs, but a hail-storm on the 25th injured the nests badly, and in one case beat the nest out of the tree. On the 31st he collected four sets of two eggs each, and one with only one egg. It being a hard tree to climb, he decided to take the egg rather than to wait to see if the bird would lay more. Not hearing from him, I returned to the grounds June 10th, and put in the day examining the nests, etc., collecting two more sets of two eggs each, one of the sets nearly ready to hatch, but with care was able to save it. The eggs are all white, or rather, bluish white, without markings, or shell stains. It having rained nearly every day since the commencement of the month, the last two sets collected are somewhat soiled and stained by the wet leaves in the nests. The eggs measured by sets as follows, viz.: First, 1.55x1.33, 1.52x1.36; second, 1.76x1.48, 1.65x1.35; third, 1.70x1.39, 1.56x1.35; fourth, 1.70x1.37, 1.68x1.30; fifth, 1.75x1.30; sixth, 1.54x1.31, 1.45x1.24; seventh, 1.70x1.38, 1.68x1.43.

The old nests had a few leaves for lining in addition to the leaves attached to the twigs used in repairing the same, but the new ones appeared to be without additional leaves. They were all built either in the forks from the main body, or in the forks of the larger limbs of the cottonwood and elm trees, and were at least from ten to a hundred rods apart, were not bulky, and when old would be taken for the nests of the common crow. They ranged in height from twenty-five to fifty feet from the ground.

## FEEDING HABITS OF PELECANUS ERYTHORHYNCHOS.

BY N. S. GOSS.

Naturalists who have not seen the White Pelicans upon their feeding-grounds have without doubt read Audubon's interesting description of the manner in which the birds unite and drive the fishes into shallow water where they can catch them, which they cannot well do in deep water, as the flesh side of their skins is honey-

combed with air cells that buoy them up like a cork, and prevent their diving,\* neither do they plunge for their food when upon the wing, like their cousins the Brown Pelicans, and therefore have to adopt fishing habits suited to shallow waters. I have often noticed the birds in flocks, pairs, and alone, swimming on the water, with partially-opened wings and head drawn down and back, the bill just clearing the water, ready to strike and gobble up the prey within their reach; if, when so fishing, they ran into a shoal of minnows, would stretch out their necks, drop their heads upon the water, and with open mouths and extended pouches scoop up the tiny fry. Their favorite time for fishing on the sea-shore is during the incoming tide, as with it come the small fishes to feed upon the insects caught in the rise, and upon the low forms of life in the drift as it washes shoreward, the larger fishes following in their wake, each from the smallest to the largest eagerly engaged in taking life in order to sustain life. All sea birds know this, and the time of its coming, well; and the White Pelicans that have been patiently waiting in line along the beach quietly move into the water and glide smoothly out, so as not to frighten the life beneath, and when at a suitable distance from the shore form into line in accordance with the sinuosities of the beach, each facing shoreward and awaiting the signal from their leader to start, upon which all is commotion, the birds rapidly striking the water with their wings, throwing it high above them, and plunging their heads in and out, fairly making the water foam, as they move in an almost unbroken line, filling their pouches as they go; and, when satisfied with their catch, they wade and waddle into line again upon the beach, where they remain to rest, standing or sitting as suits them best, until they have leisurely swallowed the fishes in their nets; and then, if undisturbed, generally rise in a flock and circle for a long time high in air. Off the south coast of Florida (a coral formation) the shoal water often extends out for miles, and the tide is scarcely perceptible. There the birds have no occasion to dive, but gather their food by coursing, and in such places the Brown Pelicans, so expert, and in dropping upon their prey in deep water are forced, in order to save their necks unbroken, to feed in like manner; this is especially noticeable in the shallow ponds within the Everglades. Several years ago, in the month of September, I had the pleasure of observing a small flock of the birds fishing in the Neosho river, Kansas, when late at eve in their southward flight they were forced by tired wings to stop. The place selected was in still, deep water, at the head of a fall or rapids in the stream, where the water for some fifteen rods, and at a depth of about six inches, was rippling and dashing over the rocks—a natural feeding-ground for the fishes. The birds, after first bathing and dressing up their feathers, giving particular attention to their primaries, would, without any unity of action, as hunger moved them, float down over the rapids, picking up and at the fishes here and there, until the still water below was reached, when they would rise and fly back, to float down again, leisurely repeating this mode of fishing until it was quite dark.

#### NOTES ON THE YELLOW-TAILED CASSIQUE.

(*Gymnostinops montezumæ*.)

BY N. S. GOSS.

The birds are known by the natives as the "Oropendula," also as the "Inca bird," but are generally called "Yellow-Tailed Cassiques," or rather, "Yellow-Tails." They are quite common in the low forest lands of Central America, on the Atlantic side, but

\* The statement in "North American Birds—Water Birds," vol. 2, page 137, that this species "dive with great celerity," is in error.